

IRTS Radio News Bulletin Sunday December 12th 2021

WSJT-X core developer goes SK

Bill Somerville, G4WJS, died suddenly and unexpectedly. He was only about 65 years old. Bill was the first to join Joe, K1JT in 2013, forming a core development group for WSJT-X. Its open-source software could not have achieved its extensive worldwide popularity and influence in ham radio without Bill's essential contributions. Our thoughts are with his family and many friends.

To all members of the IRTS

The IRTS held a committee meeting on November 20 th 2021. Items covered were routine, however the following may be of interest to all members. One item on the agenda was the updating of the IRTS constitution. A sub committee has been looking in detail at the consitution wording, in particular areas that might need updating. An example would be the holding of an online AGM. The current pandemic has raised a number of issues that would not have been relevant when the constitution was last amended. Members are encouraged to download and read the document available in the 'download' menu at www.irts.ie Any suggestions on changes can be sent for consideration to constitution /at/ irts.ie The committee endorsed the election of Dominic Carron EI5IAB to the IRTS Examination board, where he will take on the administration role. Dave O'Connor EI6AL, who had taken on that role on a temporary basis, will be retiring from the Board once the handover is completed. We are also pleased to announce that Declan Craig EI6FR has been appointed Contest Manager. This role was previously held by Joe Ryan EI7GY and the committee would take this opportunity to thank Joe for his dedication to the role during the many years he held the position. The IRTS will be 90 years old next year. To mark the occasion the Society has been allocated the call EI90IRTS. We would appreciate ideas from members on the design of a suitable QSL card to suit the call and the event. We would also like to hear from you if you have any ideas for events, contests, etc. As the call is for use by any licenced member of the Society it is an opportunity for you to come up with ideas and proposals on how the call can best be used to celebrate the occasion. The call will be co-ordinated to ensure there is no overlap of bands or modes, but subject to that restriction it can be used by members of the IRTS throughout 2022. A call co-ordination group is being set up to regulate use of the call in accordance with the terms of the licence. Full information on the process will be made available to all members as soon as possible. Any ideas you might have can be sent to EI90IRTS /at/

irts.ie EI-90-IRTS is being made available in the first place for use during our 80 metres New Year's Day counties contest. The anniversary call sign will be a bonus checklog station during this contest, with double points awarded for all valid QSOs with the station. Roger, EI8KN will be activating EI-90-IRTS on the SSB segments. CW operators wishing to operate the station during the New Year's Day contest should, no later than Monday 20th December, send details of your call, and county of operation to EI90IRTS /at/ irts.ie. If there are multiple requests the station operator will be decided by drawing lots. Wishing you all as very happy Christmas and a great New Year IRTS Committee

Club News

South Dublin Radio Club will hold its final meeting for 2021 on Tuesday, the 14th of December, from 20:00 to 22:00, via Zoom. If you wish to join us please contact us through our Twitter, Facebook, or Website for login details. So pull on those Christmas jumpers and join us for some festive radio-related craic, Reindeer antlers are optional! We will return for 2022 on Tuesday, the 4th of January, same time, same channel. We at South Dublin Radio Club would like to take this opportunity to wish all radio amateurs, SWLs and radio hobbyists a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. And we send a special season's greetings to all at the IRTS news team for your hard work and dedication in supporting us and our great hobby. HoHoHo de EI2SDR

Simon, EI7ALB, informs us that due to on-going advice on Covid restrictions, the December meeting of the Limerick Clare Amateur Radio Club was held on a very well attended Google Meet platform with some lively discussions. A decision was taken to operate an 80m SSB net on Monday nights after the local IRTS news. The 70 cms news call in usually finishes before 20:45, which will then be followed by the net on 3.770MHz +/- QRM. Storm Barra caused damage to the club's HEX Beam and HF Loop antennas. Repairs were successfully carried out on Thursday. The club congratulates the successful students who passed the most recent HAREC exam. We wish them many happy and successful years on the Amateur Bands. LCARC, the Clare Limerick Amateur Radio Club, wishes all a very Happy and Peaceful Christmas.

EIFF, short for Echo India Flora Fauna, part of the the World Wide Flora Fauna program, are pleased to announce that from the 1st of January 2022 EIFF will be run by Jer, EI3HGB, and Declan, EI9HQ. We will be adding new areas all around Ireland. There is an awards program from the main WWFF website, In addition to this we have set up our own awards program which will be run annually from the 1st of January until the 31st of December. This will be called the EIFF Park Predator And Ranger Awards. The Park Predator Award is for the first, second and third placed

Hunter station, and the top three activating stations receive the Park Ranger Award. Both awards are based on a QSO points system. All operators will receive a certificate of participation, additionally the top three in each category will receive a dedicated certificate for gold, silver, and bronze. Glass plaques will be issued for the top Predator and Ranger, and medals for runner-ups. We have a Facebook group up and running, as well as a website, so please check out eiffirl.wordpress.com

The South Eastern Amateur Radio Group reminds us that the 89th Irish Radio Transmitters AGM weekend will take place over the weekend of the 9th and 10th of April 2022 in the Woodford Dolmen Hotel, Kilkenny Road, Carlow. Anyone who wishes to book a room is advised to do so as soon as possible. Tickets for the Gala Dinner can now be pre-booked from John EI7IG for collection on arrival at the event. Tickets cost 35 Euro. The group is delighted to announce a number of Workshop Talks for Saturday, the 9th of April 2022, in the Killeslin Suite of the Woodford Dolmen Hotel as part of the weekend. Speakers on the day will include John Ronan EI7IG, Justin Cockett EI3IOB/G8YTZ, Mike Lee EI4HF, Roger Greengrass EI8KN/G4NRG and Noel Matthews G8GTZ. Admission to all talks will be free. Details of all times and topics of talks will be announced soon on www.irtsagm2022cw.blogspot.com EI2WRC would like to take this opportunity to wish all our radio friends and their families in Ireland and around the world a very happy and peaceful Christmas 2021. We hope you all have a wonderful time, and that Santa is good to you. We would also like to extend every good wish to you all for the new year ahead. We hope 2022 brings you all good health, good wealth, and plenty of new DXCC's. There is more information about the South Eastern Amateur Radio Group on www.searg.ie and their facebook and twitter page, or you can email [southeasternarg /at/ gmail.com](mailto:southeasternarg/at/gmail.com)

Competitions & Trophies

The Icelandic Radio Society I.R.A. reports that it has received authorization to use 1850-1900 kHz during ten international competitions in 2022. The authorization is granted with the consent of the Maritime Watch Center, which has priority for those frequencies. G-licensees may use up to 1kW, and N-licensees have a limit of 10 Watt.

The Russian RU3AX Memorial 160 meter CW and SSB Contest starts Friday, the 17th of December at 18:00 UTC and finishes at 21:59 UTC. Russian stations send RST and the two letter Oblast code, all others send RST and serial number.

Next Saturday will see the last big HF contests for 2021. The Canadian RAC is holding its 24 hour Winter Contest, on the same day as the OK DX RTTY Contest, organized by The Czech Radio Club.

Topband will be busy with the Stew Perry Top Band Distance Challenge. You are given one point plus another point for each 500 kms of distance, plus multipliers for lower power categories. The "Big" Stew has a high participation not only due to the good conditions for the Northern Hemisphere, but also thanks to the Plaques that Lew, W7EW, has been sending out. They are on display in shacks all around the world.

Orbital Debris

Bob Bruninga, WB4APR reports that since the Russian space littering event, he is getting almost daily close approach alerts on PCSAT, also known as OSCAR-44, a twenty year old minimalist APRS satellite. PCSAT is still giving a useful service well beyond its sell-by date, but it suffers a decaying orbit. Originally circling at around 800 km, it has descended to an altitude that brings it closer to the expanding debris cloud created by the actions of the Russian military. The telemetry logs shown on www.aprs.org indicate miss-distances in the order of 200 to 500 meters.

The Propagation Horoscope

As we are waiting for the appearance of fresh solar spots, flux values are dropping below 80, the background x-ray flux is at the class A1 level. Late Saturday, the particle count was around 20 per cubic centimeter, the solar wind dropped towards 300km per second. The geomagnetic field is unstable with k values from 1 to 5, thanks to a large northern polar coronal hole. This translates into a daytime 3000 km hop MUF above the 15m band. At night one can expect continued excellent conditions on 160m to 30m. There is a moderate chance for VHF tropo conditions along a high pressure ridge extending from the Azores for the beginning of the week.

That is the news for this week. Items for inclusion in next week's radio news can be submitted by email to [newsteam /at/ irts.ie](mailto:newsteam/at/irts.ie) for automatic forwarding to both the radio and printed news services. The deadline is midnight on Friday.

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